DEPARTMENT OF STATE

BRIEFING PAPER

R (47)

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REFUGEE POLICY

The Issue

The 1980 Refugee Act requires that the President consult with Congress before each fiscal year regarding the number of refugees to be admitted into the United States during the fiscal year. Refugee admissions are the single biggest item driving the refugee budgets of State and HHS.

Time Constraints

The admissions levels for FY 1981 have been set by consultations in FY 1980. If revisions of the FY 1981 refugee budgets are contemplated, new consultations on admissions may be required.

What We Are Doing and Why

The Act provides for an annual "normal flow" of refugees of 50,000 for fiscal 1980, 1981 and 1982; Congress is to determine the limits after those years. The President may admit more than the annual "normal flow," after consultation with Congress, for "humanitarian concerns" or "in the national interest."

The following is a summary of allowable FY 1981 admissions, determined by the President after Congressional consultation.

	Projected Admissions FY 1981	FY 1980
Indochina	168,000	168,000
Soviet Union	33,000	33,000
Eastern Europe	4,500	5,000
Middle East	4,500	2,500
Cuba		19,500
Latin America	4,000	1,000
Africa	3,000	1,200
Asians		1,200
	217,000	231,700

In compliance with the 1980 Refugee Act, we are processing refugees for resettlement in the United States in FY 1981 in accordance with the numbers arrived at during the Congressional consultations.

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